Coal India Limited for the last three years are as follows :-

(Figs. in 000 tonnes)
Data Provisional

Year	Linkage	Destoatch
1993-94	12.465	11.143
1994-95	13.965	11.342
1995-96	13.425	12.135

(d) Coal supplies to power sector in the country including power houses of Gujarat Electricity Board is accorded highest priority. Supply of coal to power sector is monitored regularly by an Inter-Ministerial Group. Appropriate corrective action is taken to step up coal supplies wherever necessary. G.E.S. has been requested to improved the arrangements for unloading of coal at their power stations. G.E.B. has also been requested to make timely payments so that the supplies are not required to be regulated on account of non-payment for coal supplied to them.

Trade Relation with CIS Countries

2179. DR. ASIM BALA :
SHRI P.C. THOMAS :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have signed any trade agreement with CIS countries; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) Government of India have concluded trade agreements with all the CIS countries except with Azerbaijan.

(b) The salient features of the agreements include:

- Promotion of bilateral trade and economic cooperation on a long term and stable basis;
- Mutual Most Favoured Nation treatment
- All commercial and non-commercial transactions in freely convertible currencies;
- Encourage and facilitate contacts between their natural and jurisdical persons *inter alia* through exchange of visits of delegations, participation in fairs and exhibitions and exchange of information;
- Encourage economic investment and technological cooperation including through establishment of joint ventures;
- Encourage opening of branch offices of the foreign trade organisations, companies, firms, banks, etc. in each others territory in accordance with their national laws and regulations;
- Promote cooperation in fields of science and technology, ecology, transport, communications, training of personnel and in other spheres of mutal interest.

Losses in Instrumentation Ltd., Kota

2180. VAIDYA DAU DAYAL JOSHI : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Instrumentation Ltd., Kota has been incurring losses;

(b) if so, the losses incurred by it till date;

(c) whether there is any proposal for merger of Instrumentation Ltd. with BHEL;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the action being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) Yes.

(b) Rs. 122.21 cr (Till 30.11.96)

(c) to (e). Instrumentation Limited had sent a proposal for merger with BHEL. After ascertaining the views of BHEL, it has been decided that this proposal need not be pursued at this stage.

Closure of Paper Mills

2181. SHRI NAND KUMAR SINGH CHAUHAN : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) the number of paper mills closed during the last three years, State-wise;

(b) the number of public sector mills and private sector mills amongst them;

(c) the reasons for the closure of the above mills;

(d) the steps being taken by the Government to find out the causes of closure; and

(e) the decision taken by the Government for the revival of the public sector paper mills?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) The data in regard to closed paper mills is not centrally mantained in the Ministry of Industry. However, according to available information the details of closed paper mills are indicated in the enclosed statement.

(b) Two subsidiaries of Hindustan Paper Corporation Ltd. (a Public Sector Mill) i.e. Nagaland Pulp & Paper Co. Ltd. & Mandya National Paper Mill are lying closed. All other units are in private sector.

(c) and (d). The reasons for the closure of these units are attributable to financial constraints,

uneconomic production, poor management, old and outdated technology and low profitability.

(e) *Nagaland Pulp & Paper Co. Ltd.:*

The company was referred to BIFR in 1992 and the Government has decided to revive the mill and the company since stands discharged as Sick Industrial Company from the purview of BIFR and the Government has approved the financial restructuring.

Mandya National Paper Mills :

The company was referred to BIFR in 1992 and the BIFR ordered winding up of the mill. The Government has filed appeal against the order of BIFR before AAFIR and the Government has decided to re-start the operations of the mill and privatise it as a going concern.

STATEMENT

S.No.	Name of State	No. of Closed Mills
1.	Assam	1
2.	Bihar	3
3.	West Bengal	15
4.	Orissa	1
5.	Uttar Pradesh	13
6.	Delhi	1
7.	Punjab	5
8.	Haryana	4
9.	Chandigarh	3
10.	Himachal Pradesh	10
11.	Rajasthan	5
12.	Gujarat	8
13.	Maharashtra	11
14.	Madhya Pradesh	7
15.	Andhra Pradesh	14
16.	Karnataka	8
17.	Tamil Nadu	8
18.	Kerala	2
19.	Pondicherry	2
20.	Nagaland	1
	Total	122

Manufacture of Mini Cigarettes by ITC

2182. SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have decided to withdraw the permission granted to Indian Tobacco Company to manufacture mini cigarettes;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether any objections in this regard have been received from any quarter;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) the profit earned by ITC since permission was granted; and

(f) whether the sale of mini cigarettes proposed to be prohibited?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) and (b). No, Sir. Industrial Licences for the manufacture of cigarettes are granted in terms of numbers and not length-wise. The concept of mini cigarettes is relevant from the Excise Duty point of view. Since lower rate of Excise Duty on mini cigarettes has been introduced from 1994-95 and Industrial Licences for the manufacture of cigarettes were issued to M/s. ITC long ago, the question of cancellation of such licences issued under the I(D&R) Act, 1951 does not arise.

(c) and (d). The Bidi Sector has expressed apprehensions regarding lowering of Excise Duty on mini cigarettes as it may affect the Bidi industry. There has, however, been no significant change in the production of bidis since reduction of Excise Duty on mini cigarettes.

(e) M/s. ITC have indicated the following production figures in their Annual Reports for the years 1994, 1995 and 1996 in respect of cigarettes :

	Quantity (million nos.)	Value (in Rs. lakhs)
1994	48387	29,81,45
1995	50609	33,35,72
1996	60972	41,05,98

Separate figures in respect of mini cigarettes are not available.

(f) No, Sir.

Defrauding of U.B.I. Mumbai

2183. SHRI RAM NAIK : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether any branch of the United Bank of India, in Mumbai, was defrauded of Rs. 8 lacs during September, 1996;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the *modus operandi* adopted therein; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to ensure that such incidents do not recur?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) to (c). United Bank of India have reported that three cheques for Rs. 8 lakhs were issued by a staff of their Kalbadevi Branch at Mumbai. These